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Tuesday, 8 June 2004, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Baja	(Philippines)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. de La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Romania	Mr. Boiangiu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Holliday

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2004/437)

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04-37926 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2004/437)

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Alvaro de Soto, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. De Soto to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, document S/2004/437.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Alvaro de Soto, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus. I now give him the floor.

Mr. De Soto: Thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to say a few words by way of introduction of the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, which is before the Council in document S/2004/437, dated 28 May 2004. I will be brief, since the report is largely self-explanatory.

As the report makes clear, the renewed effort that began on 10 February 2004 in New York and continued in Cyprus from 19 February to 22 March 2004 and in Switzerland from 24 to 29 March did not produce a settlement fully agreed between the parties. Therefore, as agreed between the parties with the support of Greece and Turkey, the Secretary-General finalized the plan on 31 March 2004.

The Foundation Agreement contained in the plan was submitted to separate simultaneous referenda on 24 April 2004. It was rejected on the Greek Cypriot side by a margin of three to one and approved on the Turkish Cypriot side by a margin of two to one. The plan, therefore, did not enter into force. The final opportunity to ensure that Cyprus should accede to the European Union as a united, rather than a divided, country has thus been missed.

Throughout the effort that began in late 1999, pursuant to Council resolution 1250 (1999), the goal has been to bring about a settlement through a decision of the people on each side. The people have at last decided for themselves. Their decision, on each side, must be respected.

While the ultimate outcome of the effort of the past four and a half years has not been a success, a great deal has nevertheless been achieved. Those achievements should be built upon, and a number of elements put in place, to keep alive the prospects of reconciliation and reunification in the future. The Security Council, which has so strongly backed the Secretary-General's efforts, has an important role to play in that regard.

The Secretary-General, for his part, has made a number of observations in the concluding sections of his report. He has made clear that, as long as the current stand-off — as described in paragraph 91 — remains, he does not see any basis for resuming his active good offices.

A broad and fundamental reassessment of the full range of United Nations peace activities in Cyprus — both good offices and peacekeeping — is timely. In his report on the United Nations Operation in Cyprus (S/2004/427), he has therefore outlined his intention to conduct a review, to be completed within three months, of the mandate, force levels and concept of operations of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), in the light of the developments on the ground, the positions of the parties and any views the Security Council might have.

The Secretary-General has also indicated his hope that Greek Cypriots will reflect on the outcome of this process in the coming months. We need to better understand the reasons for their strong rejection of the plan — which was based on the vision of the Security Council as formulated over a quarter of a century — if future efforts are to have any hope of bearing fruit, and

we need to know how the Greek Cypriot side sees the way forward. In particular, we need to know if questions of security and implementation were, indeed, the main concern, and if so, what can be done by the Security Council to address them. The Secretary-General has encouraged the Council to stand ready to do so if those concerns can be articulated with clarity and finality.

I should like to take this opportunity to clarify the meaning of the sentence in paragraph 83 of the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2004/437), which reads: "What was rejected was the solution itself rather than a mere blueprint". The sole purpose of that sentence was to emphasize that what was rejected on 24 April was a comprehensive plan for a settlement, ready for implementation, with nothing further to be negotiated, rather than a mere framework or set of principles for future negotiations.

I should mention the fact that, late yesterday afternoon, the Secretary-General received from the Greek Cypriot side a letter outlining comments regarding the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices. I believe that has been conveyed also to members of the Council pending its circulation as an official document. It goes without saying that, given that it is a rather lengthy letter, we have not had time to study it, but, obviously, we stand ready to respond to questions that members of the Council might have in that regard, either here and now or in another forum.

The Secretary-General has also, in his report, welcomed the fact that the Turkish Cypriots, in approving the plan, have unequivocally signalled their commitment to reunification. This is more than a mere expression of goodwill for a solution to the Cyprus problem; the Turkish Cypriot people have clearly backed away from their search for a separate, sovereign statehood. This is a fundamental turnabout in the direction taken by the Turkish Cypriot side for more than two decades.

The Secretary-General has therefore recommended to the Council that it should encourage the Turkish Cypriots, and Turkey, to remain committed to that goal. The Secretary-General has called on the Council to give a strong lead to all States to cooperate, both bilaterally and in international bodies, to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating the Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development. The Secretary-General has chosen his words very carefully. The action that the Secretary-General recommends, I should emphasize, would be addressed to States. It is not meant to give State rights, State functions or State institutions to the so-called Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Its purpose would not be to afford recognition or assist secession, but, rather, to promote reunification and reconciliation. This is about assisting the people in the north of Cyprus.

I wish to acknowledge the extensive and consistent efforts of many Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to reunify Cyprus. These have to continue. Civil society must play its role, and, no doubt, the European Union will give such efforts its support, as should the United Nations.

I should also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the Secretary-General's praise for the efforts made by nearly 300 Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots involved in the technical discussions, without whom the settlement plan would not have been complete. He is also grateful for the assistance of a team of some 50 United Nations experts, many seconded by the European Commission and other Governments and institutions, notably Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the United States of America; and the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Office for Project Services and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The President: I thank Mr. de Soto for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.